



County of Los Angeles  
**CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE**

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DAVID E. JANSSEN  
Chief Administrative Officer

September 19, 2003

To: Each Supervisor

From: David E. Janssen  
Chief Administrative Officer

Board of Supervisors  
GLORIA MOLINA  
First District

YVONNE BRATHWAITE BURKE  
Second District

ZEV YAROSLAVSKY  
Third District

DON KNABE  
Fourth District

MICHAEL D. ANTONOVICH  
Fifth District

**LOS ANGELES COUNTY'S RESPONSE TO LARGE SCALE POWER OUTAGE**

On August 19, 2003, on a motion by Supervisor Yaroslavsky, your Board directed the Chief Administrative Office, assisted by Internal Services, Health Services, Public Works, Fire, and Sheriff to develop a report on the County's ability to respond to a large-scale power outage of the type that recently occurred on the East Coast.

**COUNTY DEPARTMENTS**

On September 4<sup>th</sup>, the Chief Administrative Office convened a meeting of a Power Outage Taskforce that consisted of Public Works, Health Services, Internal Services, Fire, and Sheriff. This taskforce reviewed a Power Outage survey that was distributed by the Chief Administrative Office to all County departments. Information from the survey and the taskforce members indicates that Public Works, Health Services, Internal Services, Fire, and Sheriff have the capability to provide services to the public in the event of a large scale power outage. Other departments do not have the same capabilities to continue to provide all services during a large-scale power outage. Departments and agencies will require assistance in dealing with a large-scale power outage in three areas:

- 1) **Facilities/Infrastructure Support (emergency back-up power)** – Departments indicated that they do have emergency back-up power for basic evacuation and fire safety systems, such as emergency lighting, fire alarms, and sprinkler systems. However, departments **do not** have emergency back-up power to continue operations of their department's essential functions. Special attention should be directed towards the Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning (HVAC) systems of County facilities providing services to "at risk" populations such as children, the elderly, and mentally disabled.

- 2) **Communications Systems** – Most departments have telephone systems that **will not** function during a power outage. These departments will not have conventional telephone communications during one-hour “rolling blackouts” or longer duration large power outages.
- 3) **Emergency and Business Continuity Planning** – Departments have emergency plans to continue departmental services during short term “rolling blackouts.” Departments need to incorporate power outage plans for long-term power outages into current efforts underway for their business continuity plans.

## CONCLUSIONS

The County has the capability to respond to public safety related emergencies with back-up power provided to Fire, Health Services, and Sheriff departments. Internal Services can continue to operate the County’s communications relays and data processing systems and Public Works can operate infrastructure related systems (see attachment). The remaining departments do not have the capability to operate their facilities during long-term power outages. The County Emergency Operations Center is fully supported with back-up power.

## RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

The County needs to further examine the plans and procedures required to assist the Operational Area during the occurrence of a large power outage. Energy conservation efforts on the part of departments and the entire Operational Area must be encouraged in order to maximize the use of limited energy resources.

In order to develop plans and make recommendations for future Operational Area response plans, it is recommended that an Operational Area Power Outage Taskforce be created comprised of representatives from Federal, State, and local government, as well as infrastructure-related agencies in the transportation, communications, and energy fields. The taskforce will develop an appropriate disaster scenario from which the Operational Area’s power outage response plans and procedures will be developed. The taskforce will also provide the basis of an ongoing working group that would periodically convene to review the Operational Area’s ability to respond to problems created by power outages. This taskforce will report back to the Board in 120 days on the current status of the Operational Area’s response to a large-scale power outage.

DEJ:CP  
JST:jl

Attachments

c: Emergency Management Council